2: Lorimer T-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

spiritual head of the Ismailis. A few of the peasant farmers have learned to read—as some have learned to carpenter—and they have copied out such essential passages of their sacred Persian books as enable them to preside with due solemnity at a name-giving, a burial, or a betrothal. The Mir appoints a sufficient number of these modestly literate men to be khalifas, and lend a dignity to such ceremonies. When you need their services you send for one—as we send for the plumber when our pipes have burst. He performs his duty, shares with honour in the ensuing family feasting, accepts some small gift in kind according to the family's resources, and goes his way to resume his normal work in his own fields.

We knew Afiato of No. 6, for three months or more, as an obliging neighbour and father of a large batch of our child friends; we admired his skill in ploughing and threshing, and the hard work he had put into levelling an intractable patch of hill within a stone's throw of our house and converting it into a vegetable garden before we realized that he was a khalifa or lay-priest. There was nothing in dress or manner to distinguish him from his fellows; he offered no unsought advice and censored no one's morals but his own. If Hunza is, as I believe, the tidiest corner of God's earth, it is also the least priest-ridden, and the absence of fanaticism and superstition is as remarkable and refreshing as the absence of litter. There is an atmosphere of mental independence that makes the air of Hunza spiritually bracing.

What the pre-Islamic cults of Hunza were—and traces of them are slight though DL may have some conjectures to offer about them later—the Hunnukuts of to-day are extraordinarily enlightened.[1] Their folk-lore (very probably borrowed) may tell of apparitions and miracles, but they look for no marvels in their life of everyday, they see no ghosts and fear no Evil Eye. They indulge in no gymnastic prayers, they keep no Fast of Ramazan, they travel on no Hajj. I saw only one man turn Mecca-wards to pray, and that was our Kashmiri

[1] In astounding contrast to their magic- and witch-ridden Shin neighbours in Gilgit (*V. J.R.A.S.*, July, 1919, *The Supernatural in the Folklore of the Gilgit Region*).

2: Lorimer T-3 (1927-4: 1934-5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

sweeper; I heard only one muezzin sound the Call to Prayer—and saw no one pay heed to it. He was chanting from a cliff in the Mir's garden, and the Mir gathers round him craftsmen of every sort. There are a few shrines in the country reputed holy—including two burial places of Moses within a few hundred yards of each other on one mountain side—where a few rags on sticks flutter unconvincingly in the wind; and one, the shrine of Baba Ghundi in Chupursan, some seven days' march above Báltít, is the object of an occasional pilgrimage. On Tuesdays and Fridays there are said to be services in the House of Assembly, which has supplanted the older Shiah mosque, but I never observed one of our servants or neighbours absent himself from work to go to them.

Yet the people are by no means without faith. It is difficult to know exactly what even church-going Christians of our own country effectively believe—it is impossible to be sure what one effectively believes oneself—so I can offer only a tentative guess as to the average person's simple credo. The Hunzukuts hold, I think, a comforting, unquestioning faith in a good and kindly God, whose ways they cannot profess to understand. They meet bereavement with a murmur that "there is no remedy against the will of God"; they bury their loved ones with genuine sorrow, but without anxiety. They feel that "it is well with the child," and vaguely trust that some day, somewhere, somehow, they will meet again. They assume as axiomatic that God asks of them diligence and truth, fair-dealing and goodwill. They are hard-working and thrifty, tolerant to others; kind and affectionate in the home, gentle to children and the aged; generous beyond their means to the orphan; truthful and just; and they go about their daily work in the happy confidence that God is well pleased. If they din no perfunctory prayers into His ears, there are occasions when they heartily and humbly pray, as will presently be seen.

The Hunzukuts is no mystic, no poet, no artist. This life claims his full attention if he is to live at all; philosophic speculation about "fixed fate, freewill, fore-knowledge absolute" does not line his brow or disturb his rest, nor does he "keep in duty through the toilsome day, because of praise

273 brew will all be finished by the end of December, but a man is looked on as over-impetuous who does not keep it for at least a month. Old vintages are luxuries for wealthier lands. The Hunzukuts do not profess to be expert vintners or connoisseurs of wine. They consider it rather a gamble how the wine turns out: "Sometimes it is sweet and sometimes sour. Either is good to drink. But if we have enough manure and if the season has been hot enough fully to ripen the grapes, then the wine is sweet."

• 788 The wine and weaving having been disposed of and the winter-wheat sown, the year's serious work is over, and little remains but to fumigate the empty manure shed. We had come in from our walk one evening and were settling down to work after tea when I heard a modest little "Mother dear!" outside the window, and found Hérul Nisa had been sent down to tell us that Ustád Nadíro and Bibi Anjír were going to fumigate their byre in the good old style, if we would care to come. So we flung on our coats, seized a lantern, and scrambled up the particularly rocky track that led to No. 8. Bibi Anjír and her married daughter were watching proceedings from the roof of the byre which also forms the landing at the top of the ladder that leads to their verandah and summer living-room. The couple at No. 8 are old-fashioned and scrupulously keep up the ancient fumigating ceremony which many of their younger neighbours neglect.

The wall of their manure byre sticks out at right angles into the lane, and the door of it is sideways on. In the angle formed between it and the house, Nadíro had a little fire of dry sticks already burning. He took an iron ladle with a long handle and filled it full of precious apricot-kernel oil and heated it over the fire. There was a cold circular wind whizzing round which delayed the oil's getting warm and catching fire. We and a lot of interested neighbours pressed in round him as closely as we could to shelter the flame, which at last blazed up like the brandy in our tablespoons to light the Christmas pudding. Then the old man went into the byre and Hérul Nisa followed him with a bowl of cold water. He took a little of the water and flung it into the ladle four times, causing a lovely flare

WINTER AND THE "GREAT COLD"

addressed to each of the four corners of the shed. To our amazement we saw by the light of the flames that the shed was chock full of goats (we had imagined that they would have been cleared out for the ceremony) who seemed not in the least perturbed. Nadíro then came out again and lit a torch of juniper twigs at the fire and went in to wave it similarly into each of the four corners. Bibi Anjír then handed [262] down a big wooden basin of *múl* which looked like a rather slushy brown pudding with pinkish trimming on top. This festive dish is made only on special occasions, such as a child's birth or the like. Before starting in to eat the *múl* or hand it round, the old man took his stand in the door of the byre and with great dignity and reverence lifted his eyes to heaven and recited the fumigating prayer. Bits of it ran something like this: "O Moses, Holy Prophet, grant that one hundred milking vessels may be required, and that our shears may be used on a hundred sheep! May kid follow after kid and lamb after lamb! May there be rams with curly horns and he-goats with short horns turned in! May milk flow in floods and may the butter pit be filled with butter!"

Happily DL had already got the prayer written down so [233] we were able to follow it better than if we had been hearing it for the first time, and were even able to note that the Ustád got it a bit mixed in parts. We ascertained what was the point of the "short horns turned in." It is simply a question of packing. The byres are small and the beasts have all got to live crowded together in them throughout the winter, so that a princely he-goat with spreading horns is a disaster to his owner and a danger to his fellows.

Now came the moment when the family and friends would tuck into the *múl*, and we thanked our kind hosts most warmly for letting us see the little ceremony, and fled to the warmth of our own fire and our butterless tea. I was in terror lest we should be pressed to partake of the *múl* which is so special a dish that it was sure to be reeking of priceless *maltash*—of which we had no wish to rob them.

The next item on the Hunza communal programme is the Great Wedding Day, which falls about mid-December on some Thursday fixed by the Mir in consultation with the diviners.

2: Lorimer T-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

796 the remaining wood for a final flare up; there was one last uproarious scamper of many dancers: and all was still. Then
796 up stood a pair of men, reverent, solemn, sword in hand, and
● 788 recited a moving litany:

> May the New Year be blessed!
> May the seed bring forth an hundredfold!
> May every ear be filled with golden grain!
> May the mountain side be piebald with goats!
> May the pastures be piebald with sheep!
> May kid follow after kid and lamb after lamb!
> May our houses be filled with children and empty of sickness!

and to each clause the congregation fervently shouted "Yá! Yá!" as an earnest Amen.

After some time the older man who was leading began to repeat himself somewhat, and a good-humoured protest went up: "Enough, Uncle, enough!" which brought the litany to a speedy conclusion. (What a useful innovation this would be in Church and Parliament!)

Then half a dozen grey-bearded men formed a semi-circle to face the rising but still long invisible sun, and struck up a delightful solemn chant that sounded not unlike a Te Deum. In contrast to the litany which was in wholesome, rhythmic Burushaski prose, the chant was in so-called Shina, mangled by generations of Burusho singers into an almost unintelligible, though impressive anthem. David later took it down verbatim, but could only very partially reconstruct or divine the Shina original, and so far he has not been able to trace the ungarbled Shina text, which is quite possibly no longer known in its country of origin.

Then, while drum and kettledrum and pipe still played and the old men still chanted, we all moved slowly downhill in the growing daylight to "The Gate," where dancing was resumed by those who wished it, and a faint lamp burning in the Assembly Hall silently summoned the pious to morning prayer, and the ice-bound pond invited them less cordially to the preliminary ablutions. Few seemed to accept the chilly invitation.

Except myself, no woman had attended the Midnight Bon-

2; Lorimer T-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

fire, but the usual gaily dressed crowd were at "The Gate," just as on the recent Wedding Day. I slipped across to join the women and got a warm reception from many whom I knew and more whom I did not. Then an old crone came along, bearing a huge dish of flour and sprinkled a pinch on every woman's cap and left shoulder, saying as she did so: "Ya Ali!" All seemed pleased when I said: "Nay, mother, would you forget me?" and as she duly sprinkled me too I slipped a few pence into her hand. Then I extricated myself from the women's throng, scattering good wishes as I went, to rejoin David, whom I found similarly be-floured.

We thankfully toiled uphill home, too hot now in our midnight wrappings, and very shortly faithful Zaidu and Dádo produced a hot breakfast, after which we turned in and slept. There must be some magic in the Hunza air. You would hardly contemplate sitting out of doors to watch an open-air show at home at 7,600 feet from 5 to 8 a.m. on December 21st (or even on December 16th, for the Hunza calendar has got its Solstice slightly "fast") with the thermometer reading 22° Fahrenheit.

There was to be more dancing that p.m., but we felt we had seen enough for one day, and the headmen seemed relieved when we said we would not come. They confessed that after the bonfire people went home and made merry with their wine, and that there might be some mild rowdyism—and since they have no other drink but water, who shall blame them? Not we, dissolute bibbers of hot tea! We did not want to spoil our impression of the astounding orderliness of the night's merry-making. Though everyone was in the highest spirits and the youngsters full of excitement, the crowd's behaviour was perfect. Even when one torch flew right across the circle into the faces of half a dozen spectators, there was only a laughing stampede, and when the circle drew in too close and threatened to impede the dancing, some responsible grown-up simply snatched a brand from the fire and swept it round the front ranks, driving the children back amidst fun and laughter. Considering that there are no police in the country, and that the headmen have no authority except their

2: Lorimer T-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

miles daily to Báltít, as Yaman and a couple of our other young friends did, and attend the Government-supported school with the sons and grandsons of the Mir and the Wazir. Promising children of the more well-to-do can attend a more advanced school at Gilgit, and the really studious may even make their way down to Srinagar.

Ninety-nine per cent of the population, however, happily still remain illiterate, and have not fallen victims to compulsory education. When the people would question me about conditions in England, they were horrified to learn of such things as rates and income-tax, but even more aghast at the tyranny that compels both boys and girls to spend the years from five to fourteen at school. "But that's the time when they ought to be *learning things*," they said.

When my pleasant evening "By the Lamp" was ended and I had said good-bye, cautiously descended the ladder and mounted my waiting horse, I was shocked to see my host accompanying us carrying a tray of food. I had expressly stipulated that I would only accept his kind invitation on condition of not being laden with food gifts to take home. To my protests Kalbi said: "Yes, yes, Mother dear, it's all right. I'm not forgetting. I'm only taking up his supper to the sweeper."

With honourable simplicity the Hunzukuts abide by the fundamentals of Islam as they understand them. They may not be strong on ostentatious prayer and fasting, they rack their brains over no theological subtleties, but a Believer is a man and a brother, be he a Kashmiri, be he twenty times a sweeper. Here was a man of substance, a Levy, a grandfather, a much respected citizen in his small community, climbing a mile uphill to carry with his own hands a share of the evening's feast to his absentee guest. That the man was absent was no doubt a tactful concession to any caste-prejudice with which India might have infected me.

The boys lighten the monotony of the indoor weeks of the Great Cold by occasionally dashing out for a hasty game of foot polo or tipcat with their friends or keeping themselves warm with *sindak* matches. Such young men as are real dance

3: Lorimer L-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1935 AV7 Burusho AV7

Sports.

Sports are represented by Polo for men who own or can borrow horses, and children's games. The women at certain seasons amuse themselves with games of ball and swinging. 526

Religion.

By religion the Burusko of Hunza are Muhammadans of the Isma'ili or, as they term it, Maulāi sect, to which, however, they were converted from Shia-ism only three generations ago. 779

With the Maulais, restrictions, formalities and ritual are reduced to a minimum. The masjids of the former Shia days have been abandoned, and have been replaced in recent years by "jamā'atkhānas". There are no mullahs of the ordinary type. Instead there are khalifa (pl. khalifāting; xali-fa, xali-fa-tiŋ), who are more servants of the public — being called in chiefly to perform the necessary ritual at marriages and funerals — than its spiritual leaders or teachers. Spiritual authority rests with the Pīr, in this case 'Abdul Ma'ni, son of the late Shahzada Lais of Chitral. He himself now lives in Zēbāk. He replaced the honoured Pīr Jalāli Shah, latterly resident in Ishkoman, who died in February 1931. Two of the latter's daughters were taken in succession as his principal wife by the present Tham of Hunza, which affords an indication of the Pīr's status in the country. 795 793

Religious observances and prescriptions do not play any very evident part in the life of the Burusho of Hunza, but this does not appear to have any prejudicial effect on their character or conduct. They seem to have firmly planted in them the root of morality and the social and domestic virtues. The Maulais pay tribute to the Agha Khan, the head of the sect. The Burusho of Nagir are Shiahs (pl. Shiāting; ši-a-tiŋ), a more rigorous and formal school, but they do not indulge in a fanatical interpretation of the duties and implications of religion. They mildly contemn the "mog[illegible]" (Maulais) as misguided heretics and imperfect Muslims. 788 795 798

Social and Administrative Organization.

The life of the people is based on the family, and then on the village or community groups which live within definite geographical 621

124 [788] "You understand," he said, "that the reason I do not have breakfast with you is due entirely to the fact that I must rise at 3:30 every morning to perform my religious duties . . . and 'tis then I have my morning meal."

"Thank you most sincerely for your explanation. It is most important to me so I may better understand the ways of your people and yourself."

Then the Mir went on, "I have received word that two yaks are being brought down from Passu and should arrive at Altit some time during the night and will be there tomorrow morning."

Then I said to the Mir, "Would it be all right if I walked to Altit and rode one of the yaks back here to your palace?"

"That's exactly what I had in mind for you," said the Mir.

"Well, seeing there are two yaks coming down, as you mentioned, and my friend Cec is confined to his quarters by the doctor, I'll take Jahangir along and he'll ride the other yak back."

"Fine, fine!" said the Mir.

124 115 644 Then the conversation continued and the Mir said, "I have another brother and I certainly hope you will have an opportunity to meet him. He is serving in the Pakistan army—as a captain. I expect him back within the next 3 or 4 days and you will enjoy meeting him, I know. He is a most likable and interesting man. I hope he gets here before you decide to leave."

"I'd be very happy to meet him and I, too, hope he arrives before we depart."

[302] "We call him Salat," he said. "That means moustache in our language. He has one of those handlebar moustaches and he's a big man—bigger than either Ayesh or I. His proper name is Capt. Jamshed Khan."

evening meal, watch TV and then to bed.

While this may all sound very good and very logical and fit into what we believe is a pattern, the average day is really unlike what I have described here for either the city dweller or the farmer. The truth of the matter is that, as I said at the start, no two days are entirely alike.

The day of the week plays an important role. The weather contributes its variation. Then we all know full well that not even a minute is predictable. So how could anyone expect to give a clear-cut résumé of what any person's day consists?

That is somewhat the way I felt when I set out to outline what a day would be like as lived by the average citizen of Hunza. The only thing that I can hope to set out is a pattern. It may have a few or even hundreds of variations but at least the general pattern will be clear. So here is what I believe to be the procedure of one day—an ordinary day—in the life of a Hunzan.

The people of Hunza are Mohammedans of the Ismaili sect. They are in no way fanatical. In fact, the Ismaili are probably the least religious of all Mohammedans. The call to prayer is at 3:30 in the morning. Only the more pious and devout attend the service at the mosque.

A good true religious Mohammedan prays 5 times a day and on each occasion the prayer will last up to one hour, but through my entire travels through both Nagir and Hunza I saw very few instances where they took time off to pray during the day except on religious holidays or festivals. But, as I mentioned, prayer starts at 3:30 A.M. and I didn't have occasion to see them in action. Those who are devout usually pray from 3:30 to 4:30 and then go have their breakfast and so to the fields.

7:Tobe C,T-3 (1959)1960 AV7 Burusho AV7
Hunza

643 771 798 [127] Here I will quote from *The Autobiography of Sir Mohomed Nazim Khan*, K.C.I.E. (Mir of Hunza from 1892-1938 and grandfather of the present Mir):

"The people of Hunza were originally idolators and they became Shias when intermarriage with the ruling family of Baltistan was arranged and later, when my great grandfather Shah Salam Khan was on the throne, most of the country became Maulai. In Ganesh and Hinni, there are still a few Shias and two Sunnis. When I became Mir I declared to the people that they could adopt what religion they would, which annoyed my advisers who said that a country with many religions was bound to fall. I said that religion had nothing to do with ruling and have proved myself right in that there has been no religious strife in the country since that time."

788 Maybe the Hunzan farmer mumbles his prayers while he is working, but he seemingly doesn't appear to stop from his efforts on behalf of his farm.

From my actual experiences in seeing and viewing religions throughout the world, I am of the opinion that, where religion demands too much of a man's time, his industry suffers and this affects his standard of living. It is a possibility that pious, religious people throughout the world will take exception to this but, nevertheless, I am stating this as my own opinion, based on my findings and observations, and that's all it is. If anyone wants to debate the point with me, I'd be happy to provide the time and the opportunity.

The Hunzans are not fanatics and therefore they can devote more time to their labors than those who spend their time praying and resting, because of religious holidays and observances.

852 304 Being Mohammedans, circumcision is practiced on all male children. Normally this operation is performed

1: Leitner L-3 (1866-93) 1893? AV3 Dard
Burnes AV7

associations, but ceases to be a good native with his own indigenous associations. Therefore, in my humble opinion, of all the unfortunate specimens of mankind, the most degraded are those who, under the guise of being Europeanised and, therefore, reformers, have themselves the greatest necessity for reform. Their mind has become completely unhinged, thereby showing us that if we Europeans wish to do good among Orientals we can do so best by living good lives in the midst of professors of other religions, this being also in accordance with the 13th edict of Asoka.

This Druse covenant makes the mad Fatimite ruler of Egypt, Hákim, the "Lord of the Universe." As I said before, the present "Lord of the Universe" for the Hunzas is the lineal descendant of the 7th Imám, a resident of Bombay, one to whom the Muláis make pilgrimages, instead of going to Mecca or to Kerbelá. You may imagine that, even as regards the Druses, there must be something higher than *their* "Lord of the Universe;" but, such as he is, it is with him that this covenant is made. Reverting to his living colleague, the Indian "Lord," it may be stated that there are men scattered throughout India of whose influence we have only the faintest conception. I pointed out in 1866 that if any one wanted to follow successfully my footsteps in Dardistan, he would have to get recommendations from His Highness Aga Khan of Bombay, and I am glad to say that Col. Lockhart has taken advantage of that recommendation. The Druse "Lord of the Universe" is regarded as one with whom nothing can be compared. The Druses are to render him the most implicit obedience, and to carry out his behests at the loss of everything, good name, wealth, and life, with the view of obtaining the favour of one who may be taken to be God; but the sentence is so constructed as to make him, if not God, only second to God; in other words, only just a discrimination between God as the distant ruler of the Universe and, perhaps, some lineal descendant of Hákim, or rather, Hákim himself as an ever-living being, as the ruler of *this* world. This and some other prayers, with some songs, one amongst which breathes the greatest hatred to Muhammedanism, and speaks of the destruction of Mecca as something to look forward to, seem to be deserving of study. There are also references in them to rites